Citizens Project

November 22, 1996

Principal Engelen
Palmer High School
301 North Nevada Avenue
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903

copy

Dear Principal Engelen

Thank you for speaking with me on Monday. Having heard some of your concerns about reprinting the article, I want to be sure you understand why we hoped to reprint the article and the reasons for our involvement in this issue.

I too was dismayed to see a well-written article stir such commotion and possibly detract from your primary purpose as a public school: educating young people. The impetus for Citizens Project's involvement, however, was not the content of the article, but the ensuing changes proposed to the district-wide policy regarding student publications. We believe the proposed policy revisions, as currently worded, could lead to censorship of controversial articles like Ms. Nussbaum's in the future.

Reprinting the article in our publication was not an attempt to sensationalize the issue. Instead, we felt it would prevent further question as to the nature of article and raise the issue of free speech. While we still believe broader readership of Ms. Nussbaum's article would promote informed discussion, we fully respect and abide by your judgment of what is in the best interest of your school.

Please know that Citizens Project is a strong supporter of public schools, academic freedom and pluralism. To further these goals, we founded Citizens Action for Public Schools (CAPS), a group that actively supported the bond issue and defended public schools in last year's Board of Education elections. Citizens Project produces candidate surveys and sponsors forums during Board of Education elections to help voters decipher which candidates best support public schools and their mission of providing quality education to all students. We also actively oppose vouchers for private and parochial schools as they will drain critical resources from public schools and undermine the separation of church and state.

In resoponding to the attacks on the *Lever* article we seek to further some of the basic goals of public education: promoting pluralism, free speech and equal opportunity for all students. I hope to meet with you to discuss our support of public schools in the future. Also, if we can be a resource in your challenging task of educating a diverse student body please call us at 520-9899.

Sincerely,

Megan Day
Director, Citizens Project

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